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Courage of conscience

Mary Lampert recognized for years of public service

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A longtime Duxbury resident is being honored for her tireless work educating the public on the dangers of Pilgrim Nuclear Power Station.

Mary Lampert, founder of Pilgrim Watch and member of Pilgrim Coalition, will receive a Peace Abbey Courage of Conscience Award this year.

Peace Abbey, an interfaith organization committed to the study and practice of nonviolence, honors individuals and organizations that have distinguished themselves through humanitarian causes and peace and social justice activism.

Lampert, who has been active in Duxbury for decades, most recently advocated for radiological air monitors for Duxbury Bay. The air monitor, along with a weather station, was recently put online by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health's radiological division. The monitor is a stainless steel box that contains the guts of the monitor, which sends a feed to the Massachusetts Department of Public Health 24 hours a day.

The purpose of the monitor is to pick up abnormalities in the air in the event that there is something wrong at the Pilgrim Nuclear Power Station in Plymouth. There are currently 12 monitors located in Plymouth, varying distances from the Pilgrim Nuclear Power Station Reactor. The Massachusetts Department of Public Health relocated three of the monitors to Colony Plaza, Downtown Plymouth and Gurnet Point. Until now, much of Duxbury was left unmonitored.

Lampert, who spent many years working to prevent the siting of a radioactive waste dump in Massachusetts, has kept a close eye on the functions of the Pilgrim Nuclear Power Station, and has presented article after article to Duxbury voters at Town Meeting, in the hopes of keeping residents safe. Lampert represented Pilgrim Watch in the adjudication process regarding the license renewal application for Pilgrim Station from 2006 to 2012, represented Pilgrim Watch in litigation regarding the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's Post Fukushima Orders and has regularly taken part in each of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission's opportunities for public involvement. She served as chair of the Town of Duxbury Nuclear Advisory Committee from 1990 to 2011 and most recently served as co-chair of the committee. The accomplishments continue, as Lampert spearheaded a campaign to stock a radiation poisoning antidote and also helped lead a campaign to mark out an evacuation route through Duxbury. Conducting research, campaigning, traveling and testifying is a full time job and Lampert credits her husband's career as a lawyer with allowing her the ability to dedicate her life to a cause she believes in. Lampert typically spends about seven hours a day, six days a week researching, testifying and working to increase public engagement. "I feel grateful that my husband's job has provided sufficient money so I could do this on a voluntary basis as a full-time job," she said. "I didn't have to go out to get a job to supplement the family income, so I could fully focus on this issue." Lampert said Duxbury citizens have a right to preserve their property values, to community history, and to have assurance that radiation that is released daily from the Pilgrim power station is not damaging to their health. While she tirelessly works to keep the power station —as well as

Entergy, the company that owns the station, and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission — accountable for all of their actions, Lampert said it is imperative for Duxbury residents, and residents of all surrounding communities, to become engaged, to learn more about the consequences of a potential nuclear meltdown, and to speak up.

“Anything people do to get engaged is something,” she said. “Not matter what it is, it all adds up to preserving an nice community. It certainly takes a village.”

Lampert, who has lived in town for many years, said she seriously considered moving out of town because of the serious health threats from the power station. Instead, she decided to dedicate her life to ensuring citizens were not at risk.

“I chose this because of its huge significance to the potential health, safety and economic viability of this town that I happen to live in,” she said. “I chose to stay because I really like this place. It gets back to the mission of the Peace Abbey, which is committed to human and animal rights and respecting our biosphere.”